

## **USDA-NRCS Minnesota Civil Rights Advisory Committee Minutes**

May 15, 2008; 10:00am – 3:00pm

3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter, FY2008

Waite Park Field Office, Room 127

**Attendees:** Cory Drummond, CRAC Chair, Area 5 Rep  
John Anderson, Area 1 Rep  
Steve Lutes, Area 2 Rep  
Debra Hermel, Area 3 Rep  
Katundra Shears, Area 4 Rep  
Brenda Tonn, Area 6 Rep  
Mike Walker, MLRA Office REP  
Debe Walchuk, MN State Outreach Coordinator  
Lisa Buckner, FWPM  
Dave Wise, FDLTCC  
Cutrina Moreland, State Office Rep  
Gloria Larson, HR Manager  
Ann English, State Office  
Bill Hunt, State Office

### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Cory Drummond, Committee Chair at 10:00am.

Approval of January 16, 2007 meeting minutes:

Motion: Cutrina Moreland, Second: Brenda Tonn

### **2008 Minnesota Civil Rights National Review**

Cory summarized the National review procedure from the state office, SEPM interviews, and field office visits to northeast part of the state. A report of commendable activities, recommendations, and required action items was distributed and discussed.

### **State Conservationist Comments**

Mr. Hunt commented on how civil rights should become part of our normal operations. There are a number of new employee or positions with new employees in the state that represent ethnic and gender diversity. He gave an update on the farm bill and budget and explained scenarios that may occur whether it passes or fails in Congress. There were 3.9 million dollars devoted to 105 beginning farmers and \$900,000 devoted to 33 limited resource producers.

The committee watched a video on the community of Mauritius. It demonstrated how many different religions and cultures work together to create 100% employment and 98% literacy.

### **230 File Assembly**

The committee discussed organization of the civil rights 230 file. We reviewed section 120 in the General Manual that lists the labels of the 230 filing system and when certain items expire. The 6-part folder that each field office keeps should list the current year

information. Other information that is required but not necessarily looked at regularly can be stored in separate subsections and filed accordingly based on the 230 system.

### **Web Site Updates**

Ideas for the website that were discussed:

- Post brief review and details of media we have seen that relates to civil rights
- Post information related to veteran contact or assistance information as well as information on programs others can get involved with that help active duty soldiers.

The poster website link is out of date. A motion by Steve Lutes, second by Katundra Shears was made to link to the national office guidelines. Motion carried.

### **SEPM**

Dave Wise gave an update on the American Indian Alaska Native program. He discussed the FDLTCC Earth week celebration, the INCA outreach meeting, and working with the Plant Materials center to reestablish native prairie plants at the school.

Debe Walchuck discussed outreach activities. The immigrant farmers conference in March was very successful. A Womans Ag leadership conference was held in April for woman producers and professionals. The supplemental tracking system is being considered for use in our outreach reporting.

Gloria reported on employee updates and student placement. She also discussed the 457 series for employment. New guidance for qualifying for a 457 job is being written by OPM.

Next Meeting: August 20<sup>th</sup>

Meeting Adjourn: Motion: Katundra Shears Second: Cutrina Moreland